

# Marketing at Farmers Markets

Agriculture and Natural Resources Fact Sheet #527

A farmers' market is a place where growers gather to sell their produce. They rent an area or stall and set up shop. Markets are held indoors as well as outdoors. They vary from one day a week during the growing season to daily, year-round operations. Selling directly to the consumer gives a farmer greater control over pricing. There are no middlemen, so there is potential for a larger return per unit. Bookkeeping is minimal as all sales are for cash. Remember, however, that selling at a market means time away from the farm and added transportation.



## Do Some Research

Visit different markets. Assess how well the particular market will serve your needs. Talk to customers and find out why they shop there, what they like. Observe the various vendors; who is selling a lot? What type of crowds attend the market? Are there gaps in the varieties of produce for sale? Remember to keep in mind travel time to and from the market.

## Talk With The Market Manager

Find out what's required in order to participate. Ask if the market is actively promoted in the community. If people don't know about the market, there won't be anyone to buy your produce!

## Sell Freshness

Appearance is critical. The consumer is looking for fresh, clean and appealing produce. Customers buy with their eyes and eat with their stomachs.

## Balance Your Scales

Be sure to comply with regulations for weights and measures. See Fact Sheet #522 *Directory of Direct Marketing Regulations* for information.

## Pay Attention To Presentation

Arrange your produce in an inviting way, make it colorful. Keep the area neat and tidy. Make certain to display prices. People will be more inclined to stop and see what you have.

## Be Organized

Have everything you need on hand: bags, change, display bins, price signs, an accurate scale, recipes, flyers about

your farm. You want to have time to be with your customers; not spend your day running for supplies.

## Sell Yourself

Be friendly, courteous, helpful. You are building relationships. People like farmers' markets because they get to deal with a real live farmer. Providing recipes, storage advice, and other information builds customer trust and loyalty. It is that relationship that will make them come back to you, time and time again.

## Consider Associated Opportunities

Farmers markets can be a great place to make contacts, grow your customer base, or take orders for products. You can start a mailing list of your most interested customers, gather names for mail order or internet order business, or offer newsletters about your operations.

## Market Value-Added Products

Whether you are test marketing a new value-added product or selling a tried and true one, farmers markets are a wonderful venue for selling value-added items. See Fact Sheet #518 *Value-Added Enterprises for Small-Scale Farmers*.

## Comply with Regulations

Take the time find out what regulations apply and to do what is necessary to comply with them. Farmers markets require this and you be glad you did because your customers will have confidence in your products. For information on regulations contact the Washington State Farmers Market Association and see Fact Sheet #522 *Directory of Direct Marketing Regulations*.

## King County Farmers' Markets

### Enumclaw

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#### Enumclaw Country Market

Railroad St. & Griffin Ave

April to October

9:30 am-3:00 pm, Saturdays

Suzanne Cohen (253) 939-1707

PO Box 871, Enumclaw, WA 98022

### Issaquah

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#### Issaquah Public Market

Pickering Barn, S.E. 56th St. & 10th Ave. N.W.

April to September

9:00 am-3:00 pm, Saturdays

Jean Sillers (425) 837-3321

PO Box 1307, Issaquah, WA 98027-1307

### Kent

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#### Kent Market

Municipal Lot, 4th & Smith Sts.

April to October

9:00 am-4:00 pm, Saturdays; 10:00 am-3:00 pm, Sundays

Candy Howard (253) 813-6976

PO Box 557, Kent, WA 98035-0557

### Redmond

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#### Redmond Saturday Market

Leary Way at Redmond Town Center.

May to October

8:00 am- 2:00 pm, Saturdays

(425) 882-5151

PO Box 0964, Redmond, WA 98073-0964

### Seattle

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#### Columbia City Farmers Market

4801 Rainier Ave. S. & S. Edmunds St.

June to October

3:00 pm-7:00 pm, Wednesdays

Phone (206) 632-5234

4519 1/2 University Way NE #202, Seattle 98105

#### Fremont Farmers Market

N. 34th St. & Fremont Ave.

April to October

10:00 am-4:00 pm, Sundays

Michael Blakely (425) 333-6386

PO Box 301, Carnation, WA 98104

#### Pike Place Market

1st Ave. & Pike St.

Year round

9 am-6 pm, Mon. to Sat., 11 am-5 pm, Sun.

Mark Musick (206) 682-7453

85 Pike ST., Rm. 500, Seattle, WA 98101

*Organic Farmer Days at Pike Place Market*

June to October

10 am-5 pm, Wednesdays & Sundays

### University District Farmers Market

Corner of NE 50th & University Way NE

May to October

9:00 am-2:00 pm, Saturdays

Phone (206) 632-5234

4512 University Way NE #102, Seattle, WA 98105

### West Seattle

Corner of SW Alaska St. and 44th Ave SW

June to October

11 am-3 pm Sundays

Phone (206) 632-5234

4519 1/2 University Way NE #202, Seattle 98105

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### Vashon Island

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#### Vashon Farmers Market

1/2 block N. of Bank Rd., across from Bob's Bakery

March to October

10:00 am-3:00 pm, Saturdays

Richard Odell (206) 463-6557

PO Box 1448, Vashon, WA 98070-1448

### Woodinville

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#### Woodinville Farmers Market

175th St., next to City Hall

March to October

9:00 am-4:00 pm, Saturdays

Grant Davidson (425) 485-1042

PO Box 1927, Woodinville, WA 98072

## Resources

### Washington Farmers Market Association

State Farmers Market Representative, Zachary Lyons

P.O. Box 30727, Seattle, WA 98103; (206) 706-5198;

email: [zach@wafarmersmarkets.com](mailto:zach@wafarmersmarkets.com); web: [http://](http://www.wafarmersmarkets.com)

[www.wafarmersmarkets.com](http://www.wafarmersmarkets.com).

### Washington State Department of Agriculture (WSDA)

Gerald A. Buendel, Program Manager

PO Box 42560, Olympia, WA 98504-2560

Weights and Measure Inspection (360)902-1856

Email: [jbuendel@agr.wa.gov](mailto:jbuendel@agr.wa.gov).

### City of Seattle Weights and Measures

805 S Dearborn St, Seattle, WA 98134; (206)386-1298.

### Directory of Direct Marketing Regulations. 1999. WSU

Cooperative Extension King County Fact Sheet #522. Call

(206)296-3900 to order.

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## Alternate formats available upon request.

## 206-205-3100 (TTY 711)

Written by [Sylvia Kantor](#), WSU Cooperative Extension King County, 1999.